Unsettled wintry week for the UK

12 December 2011 - One of the stormiest periods the UK has seen for several years is set to continue this week with heavy rain, strong winds and snow for parts of the country.

The end of the week in particular could see some very stormy conditions across England and Wales. The Met Office is keeping a close eye on this developing situation to keep everyone up-to-date with the latest information.

This week has already seen some heavy rain and winds gusting up to 70mph in the south of England. Further strong winds are expected today in northern England, southern Scotland and Northern Ireland, with gusts up to 80mph possible on exposed parts of the coast and 50-60mph further inland.

Snow is expected in northern areas today and tomorrow, although there is the risk that any part of the UK could see some snow flurries.

Tomorrow looks bright and breezy for most places, but early indications are that there is a potential for another storm system to affect parts of England and Wales later on Thursday and into Friday.

Transcript for stormy weather for the UK (PDF, 81 kB)

Tim Hewson, Chief Forecaster at the Met Office, said: "There is some uncertainty in the forecast for later in the week, but there is potential for a storm which may bring strong winds and heavy rain to parts of the UK, and possibly colder air to more northern areas - which could continue the risk of snow, particularly for higher ground, in the north.

"We are keeping a close eye on the situation and are working closely with government agencies to keep them informed of the latest information. Our forecasts and weather warnings are updated regularly 24 hours a day, so we advise everyone to regularly check these to stay up-to-date with the situation."

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Stormy weather for the UK – 12/12/2011

Tim Hewson – Chief Forecaster

The weather across the UK is in a very disturbed mood at the moment and we're in for a very unsettled week right across the UK. As you can see here there's a lot of rain, all these coloured symbols here are rainfall symbols, coming across the UK this evening and tonight, accompanied by some very strong winds, particularly across the south of the UK. And then tomorrow as we move on that will be followed by much colder westerly airflow with some wintery showers and some people may see their first snow of the season tomorrow and during the day, particularly northern parts but snow cant be ruled out in some southern parts as well. And then there's a little bit of a rest bite to come on Wednesday and the first part of Thursday, still quite chilly and still some showers around. As we go into the latter part of Thursday and Friday, we're really concerned about the potential for a major storm to hit the UK, bringing very strong winds, more heavy rain, potentially some snow as well and so we're keeping a very close eye on that at the moment.

What this animation here shows is lots of different computer solutions for Thursday night going into Friday, showing all the possible outcomes in terms of the pressure pattern, the rain and the snow, where the winds and fronts will be and you can see that there's a lot of different outcomes but a lot of those look like dartboards and the ones that looks like dartboards imply very very strong winds across certain parts of the UK. So as you can see from that there's really a potential to actually have a very nasty event on Thursday and Friday. At this stage we can't seem to pin down the exact detail. My job as Chief Forecaster is to try and come out with the most likely solution at the moment and at present it looks like there will be heavy rain, very strong winds and some snow, particularly in England and Wales and Scotland and Northern Ireland are at risk as well.